

**Message to the Senate Transmitting
the Hong Kong-United States
Agreement on the Transfer of
Sentenced Persons**

May 5, 1997

To the Senate of the United States:

With a view to receiving the advice and consent of the Senate to ratification, I transmit herewith the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of Hong Kong for the Transfer of Sentenced Persons signed at Hong Kong on April 15, 1997. I transmit also, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State with respect to this Agreement.

At present, transfers of sentenced persons between the United States and Hong Kong (in either direction) are conducted pursuant to the 1983 multilateral Council of Europe Convention on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons, which is in force for both the United States and the United Kingdom, and which the latter has extended to Hong Kong. Effective July 1, 1997, however, when Hong Kong reverts to the sovereignty of the People's Republic of China, the Council of Europe Convention will no longer provide a basis for such transfers.

The agreement signed on April 15, 1997, will provide a basis for such transfers to continue after Hong Kong's reversion. The agreement is modeled after both the Council of Europe Convention and other bilateral prisoner transfer treaties to which the United States is a party. It would establish essentially the same procedures as are now followed with respect to transfers of prisoners between the United States and Hong Kong, and would continue the requirement that all transfers be consented to by the sentencing state, the sentenced person, and the receiving state. When the sentenced person has been sentenced under the laws of a State of the United States, the consent of the authorities of that State will also be required.

I recommend that the Senate of the United States promptly give its advice and consent to the ratification of this Agreement.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
May 5, 1997.

**Message on the Observance of Cinco
de Mayo, 1997**

May 5, 1997

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Cinco de Mayo.

The life of our nation has been continually renewed and strengthened by the many different people who choose to come here and become our fellow citizens. Each brings a part of his or her own heritage, which over time becomes part of our common heritage. As we seek to become a more united people, we must not forget our roots, for they remind us of who we are and of what we have to share with others.

This year, as we celebrate the 135th anniversary of the Mexican Army's triumph at the Battle of Puebla, we realize anew how much our nation has been enriched by the people and culture of Mexico and how closely our futures are intertwined. The U.S.-Mexican relationship is one of the closest our nation has today, and it is most appropriate that my visit to Mexico should begin on Cinco de Mayo.

On this day devoted to victory, pride, and independence, let us rededicate ourselves to strengthening the bonds of friendship and partnership between Mexico and the United States. Let us work together to ensure that the legacy of courage and freedom we commemorate on Cinco de Mayo will continue to inspire us as we look forward to the promise of the twenty-first century.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a wonderful holiday.

William J. Clinton

Remarks at the Welcoming Ceremony in Mexico City, Mexico

May 6, 1997

President and Mrs. Zedillo, members of the Mexican Government, citizens of Mexico, *saludos, amigos*. I am delighted to be in Mexico, rich with history, culture, and beauty, and most of all, a great and good people who have given so much to the world.

In 1943, the Presidents of our countries exchanged visits in Monterrey and Corpus Christi, launching a tradition of Presidential meetings we carry forward today. President Roosevelt noted, in that dark night of war, that our people had found they had common aspirations and could work for a common objective. Today, at the dawn of a new century, in a very different time, we still have common aspirations, and we must work for a common objective, for the partnership between our two great nations has never been more important.

Powerful currents of commerce and culture pull us closer together. A growing convergence of values and vision gives our friendship new force. Mexico is opening democracy's doors, embarking on bold economic reform, decentralizing power, and giving new voice to its citizens, communities, and regions.

The success of Mexico's endeavors matters to the United States of America. Our nations share far more than a common border; we share common challenges and common opportunities as we move toward a new century. We must meet the future together, respecting each other's uniqueness but knowing that in today's world, cooperation is the surest path to security, prosperity, and peace.

We are reaping the benefits of more open trade and working toward a wider community of stable, free-market democracies throughout the Americas. We want a 21st century where economic growth creates more and better jobs, where a good education and a clean environment are the birthright of every child, where we conquer our common enemies of drugs and crime, where accountable governments provide the tools for people to make the most of their own lives. Our challenges are great, but so is our resolve.

President Zedillo, I thank you for taking some time last night to show me through the remarkable museum containing the ancient heritage of Mexico. Here in the heart of modern Mexico, the remnants of a remarkable ancient civilization rise up through the city's foundations. Your great writer Carlos Fuentes has written, "The greatness of Mexico is that its past is always alive."

But, Mr. President, just as alive and just as great is the vitality of Mexico's present and the promise of its future. I have seen it in the bold leadership you have exerted, in the vibrant debate going on in your country, in the strong efforts made by the ordinary citizens of Mexico. Mexico's promise for the future is seen in the hands of its working people, in the efforts of those working to deepen democracy, in the talent of its writers and artists, and most of all, in the faces of the children here today.

Mr. President, our histories and our destinies are forever joined. Let us reach across our common frontier to embrace our tomorrows together, to enter the 21st century as valued partners and trusted friends.

Again, thank you for making Hillary and me and our party feel so welcome. And thank you for the future we are building together.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:28 a.m. at Campo Marte. In his remarks, he referred to President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico and his wife, Anilda Patricia.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico in Mexico City

May 6, 1997

DEA Agents

Q. President Zedillo, could you——

President Zedillo. The press conference will be later on, and I'll be delighted to answer there any questions.

Q. Well, while we've got this opportunity, let me just clarify what the Mexican Government's position is on DEA agents being allowed——

President Zedillo. No, we'll talk about that in the press conference. Now we have to have our private conversation, and I have spoken about that before.